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Text:

UNCLAS ABU DHABI 02786

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ACTION: PAO
INFO: ECON AMB POL DCM

DISSEMINATION: PAO
CHARGE: PROG

APPROVED: PAO:OLSINHILARY
DRAFTED: PAO:AHOSHAN
CLEARED: PAO:THAMDI

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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6024
RUENAAA/SECNAV WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE
RUEHZM/GULF COOPERATION COUNCIL COLLECTIVE
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 1049
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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 ABU DHABI 002786

SIPDIS

STATE FOR NEA/ARP; NEA/PPD; NEA/RA; INR/R/MR; PA; INR/NESA; INR/B;
RRU-NEA
IIP/G/NEA-SA
WHITE HOUSE FOR PRESS OFFICE; NSC
SECDEF FOR OASD/PA
USCINCCENT FOR POLAD
LONDON FOR MCKUNE

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: ARABS AND ISRAELI AGGRESSION; GULF WOMEN
QUOTAS

1. Summary: A front-page editorial by the Editor in Chief of "Al-Khaleej" criticizes the silence with which most Arabs have reacted to recent Israeli actions. Another unsigned editorial in "Al-Khaleej" calls for an emergency Arab summit to respond to recent developments in Gaza. A female Emirati professor writes in "Al-Khaleej" encouraging Gulf countries to establish quotas for politically active women to ensure them an adequate voice and experience in affairs of state. Finally, an editorial in "Al-Bayan" urges Arab nations that are incapable of matching Israeli military power to actively expose and disseminate information about Israeli practices. End Summary.

2. Under the headline "When silence arouses suspicions", the Sharjah-based pan-Arab daily "Al-Khaleej" (circulation 85,000) published the following in an 07/08 front-page editorial signed by Dr. Abdullah Omran, the publication's Editor in Chief:

"The Arab people's current reaction to the barbaric actions undertaken by the Israeli military is morally unjustified and politically scandalous... The Arabs' present silence allows Israel to take one more step towards turning the Palestinian territories into prisons for their own people and allowing barbaric military forces to besiege the Palestinians, depriving them of the most basic needs of life such as water, electricity and food... Israel is a

terrorist state of the highest order, displaying nothing but hostility, brutality and murder. Remaining silent in the face of such actions only allows their brutality to escalate, promising to eventually leave the Arabs completely without refuge from the ocean to the sea. "

¶3. Under the headline "Emergency Arab summit", the Sharjah-based pan-Arab daily "Al-Khaleej" (circulation 85,000) published the following in an 07/08 unsigned editorial:

"Arab countries have presented a draft resolution to the UN Security Council demanding that Israel cease its aggression, withdraw from the Gaza strip and release Palestinian ministers and officials detained. Israel's reply was to continue its aggression, even as the United States threatened to use its veto vote if this proposal were ever brought before the Council... Such actions demonstrate the United States' support for Israeli aggression, even as Arabs continue to remain silent and wait... Does not the grave situation in Palestine, which impacts not just the Palestinians but all peoples in the region, deserve an emergency Arab summit, where resolutions and positions can be collectively forged in a manner more suitable for the challenges at hand? Perhaps then Arabs could make the world see that they are indeed a significant force in the region, one whose destiny cannot be so easily manipulated by the United States and Israel."

¶4. Under the headline "Women's empowerment in the Gulf in light of the Kuwaiti elections", Emirati, UAE University professor Dr. Fatima Al Sayegh, wrote the following in an 07/08 editorial in the Sharjah-based pan-Arab daily "Al-Khaleej" (circulation 85,000):

"... Gulf countries, though not yet ready for full political participation by women, can still take a first step towards the future. Political leaders should begin preparing Gulf communities [for women's political participation] by establishing quotas that ensure reasonable proportional representation for Gulf women in elected and appointed political bodies. They should avoid empty symbolic measures based on standards that do not genuinely serve the interests of women. Yet at the same time, women who do not want to take on the responsibilities of political participation or are incapable of doing so should not be included in or benefit from such a system. Without such measures, politically active women in the Gulf will never earn the respect their participation deserves from others."

¶5. Under the headline "Who judges or accounts for murderers?", the Dubai-based Arabic-language daily "Al-Bayan," (circulation 90,000) published the following in an 07/08 unsigned editorial:

"Is the goal of Israel's recent actions the liberation of their captured soldier or the Gaza strip itself? The soldier is merely a prisoner of war, one who fell into the hands of a legitimate Palestinian resistance group in accordance with international laws and norms. Yet Israel has depicted him as having been kidnapped by a terrorist organization... Although Arab nations pushed Israel to withdraw from Gaza through the UN Security Council, these actions have again proven useless, particularly as they continue to be defeated by the United States... If Arab nations are not able to confront power with power, they can at least use political, diplomatic, media and even economic power, not only to expose Israeli practices, but also to deter their aggression by levying punishments and ensuring accountability..."

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